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Acceptability of condom use in the prevention of sexually transmitted infections

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ABSTRACT

Sexually Transmitted Infection or STI is a crucial issue dealt by the society. It is crucial because its incidence has significantly increased and is alarming to the society. It is alarming for individuals who lack the knowledge and awareness on condom use. Appropriateness and consistent condom use may prevent and decrease the risk of STI. The acceptability of condom use from the respondents with agreement to the prevention of sexually transmitted infection is presently 83.95%. Further, there is no significant relationship between acceptability and the respondent's profile. It is of utmost importance that individuals, especially students must have the knowledge and education of the importance of condom use in the prevention of STI. Since STI is easily transmitted through sexual intercourse, condom use still remains one of the best lines of defense against contracting the infection. Therefore, the use of condoms is acceptable.

Keywords: *acceptability, condom, prevention, senior nursing students, sexually transmitted infections*

I. INTRODUCTION

Condom use was recognized as a significant factor in the strategy to prevent further transmission of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI). There is a consensus that the inappropriate and inconsistent use of condoms could have a major impact on acquiring the infection and further spread of the disease. The Executive Director of Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development Foundation (PLCPDF), Ramon San Pascual (2008) said that "These condom ads do not suggest that people engage in sex but merely inform people that condom use is one method to plan families, avoid teenage pregnancies and prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS". Hence, workers in the entertainment business

engaging in multiple sexual partners have a higher risk of getting infected and spreading sexually transmitted infections like HIV. The use of condoms against the transmission of STIs is a global campaign that can reduce if not eliminate transmission. This campaign is helpful to those people operating entertainment businesses. On the contrary, the use of condoms among those individuals who are directly involved in entertainment may feel the pressure of having sex without the use of condom as demanded or desired by a customer especially so when such pressure means money or fear of losing customers (World Health Organization, 2002).

HIV became widespread in the early 1980's. Its huge impact sparked global concern that

ignited various researches in the prevention of its transmissions. Tremendous efforts were made worldwide. Campaign like "ABCs" "Abstinence, Be faithful, or Use of condoms" of Uganda was an attempt in preventing the spread of the virus to neighbouring countries and beyond. The use of abstinence had some success among young, unmarried people, but the use of condoms also became appealing to many married men in their extra-marital affairs. The use of condoms is the only available option to women as a barrier method from getting HIV infection. Moreover, condom promotion remains to be an important protection between men and women engaging in casual sex (Carey, Senn, Venable, Coury-Doniger & Urban, 2008)

The key elements of successful prevention according to the United Nations Joint Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) are communication, behaviour modification, the use of condom, early detection and counselling, and the management and treatment of sexually transmitted infections. UNAIDS asserts that all people must be provided with basic information and the means to protect themselves.

A recent survey showed that an alarming 77% of all sexually active Filipino males had never used a condom before. According to the Young Fertility and Sexuality Study 3 (YAFS3), a national survey of individuals close to 20,000 between ages 15 and 24, about 90% of which were adolescents had experienced premarital sex without using condoms in their recent sexual encounter (Laguna, 2002). In 2003, new cases of sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis were increasing in an alarming rate as reported by the Secretary of Health, Manuel Dayrit. In 2000, 18 out of every 100 pregnancies in the Philippines ended in abortion, compared to 24.5 of every 100 pregnancies in the United States. Furthermore, due to high population growth and increasing rate of unemployment (10.9% in 2004), this has prompted many Filipinos to work overseas. This in turn resulted to the Philippines becoming more vulnerable to STIs. From January 1984 to July 2006, the Department of Health of the Philippines documented 2,600 to be seropositive and 906 of which were Overseas Filipino

Workers (OFW) (Department of Health, National Epidemiology Center, 2011).

The 2002 Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Survey showed that the percentage of young people engaging in premarital sex has increased from 17.8 percent in 1994 to 23.1 in 2002. Among those sexually active young people, whose ages range between 15 to 27 and 34 percent of this age group, were reported to have multiple sexual partners. The percentage of young men and young women engaging in unsafe sex was 70% and 68%, respectively. Only 60% of young people believed that there is no chance for them to contract HIV and AIDS.

The Philippines is predominantly a Catholic country. Its government is challenged by Philippine anti-abortion organizations by refusing to promote the use of condoms through social media. These organizations purported that frequent condom advertisements (ads) on radio and television commit an offense on society's decorum, dignity, and morality. They have filed a complaint with the Broadcasters Association of the Philippines (KBP) and the Advertising Board (AdBoard) to ban radio and television ads "selling a condom lifestyle". Mass media is a very powerful tool that can raise public awareness, instigate public discourse, shape public opinion, and move people to advocate for policies on populations and reproductive health. Public opinion, in turn, strongly influences policy-makers' views and positions on these issues (Department of Health, National Epidemiology Center, 2011).

However, all sectors must work together for the prevention and control of STIs. Community leaders, members of the academe and even nursing students play a particular role on this, considering their mandate to look after the welfare of their patients. An understanding among health workers is necessary to gain insight as to its appropriate health promotion activities especially in advocating the need to be aware of the current situation of the STIs epidemic.

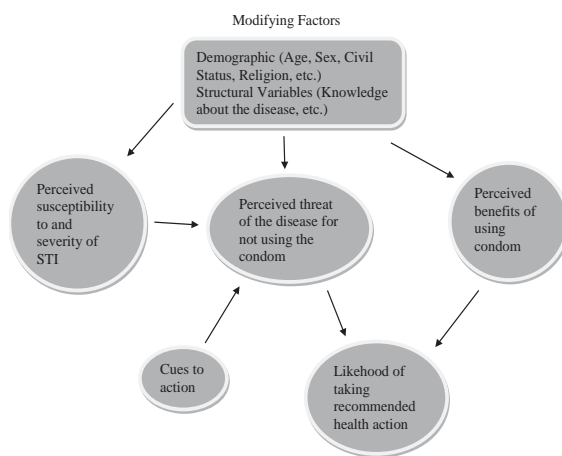
The study assessed the acceptability of condom use in the prevention of STI among senior nursing students as an effective strategy in hindering the spread of STIs. The result elucidated some issues as to the acceptability of the students, which may be influenced by many factors in the

society. Further, as future healthcare providers, they are encouraged to be non-judgmental in maintaining health teachings among the wider population.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Theoretical Framework of the study is illustrated in Figure 1. The Health Belief Model is the most widely applied theory to understand health seeking behavior (Becker & Rosenstock, 1974). It originated from the influence of Kurt Lewin's theories which imply that one's perception of reality more than the objective reality influences behavior. The theory aims to answer the changes and maintenance health behavior, thus results to a framework for health actions (Glanz, Rimer & Viswanath, 2008)

Figure 1
Schematic Diagram of Theoretical Framework



As presented in the diagram, the acceptability of an individual, particularly the nursing students, on the promotion of condom use as a prevention of STI, can be influenced by modifying factors that interplay in the students' daily lives. Age, gender, religion and civil status may be unconsciously or consciously affecting the attitude of the students to accept condoms as a strategy in the prevention of STI.

Based on a study done in Bangladesh, more than 1/3 of the youth believed washing his or her genitals after sex could prevent STI transmission.

As the individual grows older, the wider his or her experience is thus making it more easy for him or her to accept the promotion of condom use as prevention of STI (Haseen, 2006).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the degree of acceptability of the respondents on condom use in the prevention of Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

Table 1
Degree of acceptability of Condom use in the Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI)

Statement	Degree of Acceptability				Mean	Interpretation
	VA (4)	A (3)	LA (2)	NT (1)		
The use of condom is one of the "campaign ads" to be implemented about STI.	53	26	1	1	3.62	VA
Condoms are the single most effective technology to protect against sexual transmission of STI.	29	39	9	4	3.15	A
As a health worker, education to our clients about the condom use is the most priority in the prevention of STI.	36	35	9	1	3.31	VA
"100 percent condom use programme" should be implemented in the Philippines.	38	34	7	2	3.33	VA
Seminars for the Overseas Filipino Workers about the promotion of condom use should be included in their requirements.	45	32	3	1	3.49	VA
Factor Mean					3.38	VA

Legend: VA - Very Acceptable
LA - Less Acceptable
NT - Not Table

The table shows that the statements, “The use of condom is one of the “campaign ads” to be implemented about sexually transmitted infections (STI)”, has a Factor Mean (FM) of 3.62, which is very acceptable, and “Condoms are the single most effective technology to protect against sexual transmission of STIs”, has a FM of 3.14, are acceptable, respectfully, for the nursing students were educated on the various methods of contraception which are effective aside from condoms on the other hand, the statements, “As a health worker, education to our clients about the condom use is the most priority in the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STI)”, has a FM of 3.31, which is very acceptable. Prior to accepting condom as effective method in prevention of STI, individuals should be properly educated on how it works and its effectivity.

The next statement which is “100 percent condom use programme” should be implemented in the Philippines” has a FM of 3.33, are very acceptable for the student nurses were open to the idea of condoms as one of the effective measures to inhibit STI spread, which means they see the need of OFWs on prevention measures using condoms. All in all, the five statements in the questionnaire, have a total FM of 3.38, which is very acceptable. Majority of the respondents (68/81) agree that the use of condoms can help in the prevention of the transmission of STIs, hence, they agree that it is the single most effective technology.

Table 2
Relationship of Degree of Acceptability and Age.

Degree of Acceptability	Age Bracket						X ²	Table Value	Interpretation
	23-30		31-38		39-46				
	Fo	Fe	Fo	Fe	Fo	Fe			
Very Acceptable	23	24	16	16	8	7	0.18	12.59	Null Hypothesis is Accepted
Acceptable	18	16	10	10	3	5	1.05		
Less Acceptable	1	1	0	1	1	0.3	2.6		
Not Acceptable	0	0.5	1	0.3	0	0.15	2.25		
df = 3 @ 0.05 α	Total X ² :						6.08		

Table 2 shows the relationship between the

degree of acceptability on condom use in the prevention of STI and the respondents' age. It showed that the computed X² was 6.08. It also showed that the table value was 12.59, with the *df* of 3 at 0.05 α.

This further shows that the computed X² of 6.08, was substantially lesser than the table value of 12.59. This means that, there is no significant relationship between the degree of acceptability and the respondents' age. This finding contradicts the findings of the study done in Bangladesh wherein more than 1/3 of the youth believed washing his/her genitals after sex could prevent STI transmission, thus making them more at risk of contracting sexually transmitted infection and Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (Haseen, 2006).

Also, this contradicts the findings of the study done in Thailand in 2006 wherein they concluded that among their adolescent respondents who engaged in sex, only less than ¼ or 18.8 % had used condoms consistently (Tangmunkongvorakul, 2006).

Table 3
Relationship of Degree of Acceptability and Gender

Degree of Acceptability	Gender				X ²	Table Value	Interpretation
	Male		Female				
	Fo	Fe	Fo	Fe			
Very Acceptable	9	7	38	40	0.7	7.82	Null Hypothesis is Accepted
Acceptable	3	5	28	26	0.95		
Less Acceptable	0	0.3	2	2	0.3		
Not Acceptable	0	0.15	1	0.8	0.5		
df = 3 @ 0.05 α	total X ² :				2.15		

Table 3 shows, the relationship between the degree of acceptability on condom use in the prevention of STIs and the respondents' gender. It showed that the X² was 2.15 while the table value was 7.82, with the *df* of 3 at 0.05 α.

This further Sshows that the computed X² of 2.15, was substantially lesser than the table value of 7.82. The result suggests that, there is no significant relationship between the degree of acceptability and the respondents' gender. This

finding contradicts the study done in India in 2001 where they concluded that prevalence of STIs was reported to be 2% and 3% among adolescents. Thus, a clear-cut gender distinction in knowledge and attitudes about reproductive and sexual health issues was found (Sathyanarayan, 2001). This also contradicts the findings done in the Philippines in 2002 wherein it revealed that females are more confident in insisting on condom use and in discussing sex and reproductive health issues with service providers than their male counterparts (Laguna, 2002). Furthermore, condom use is abysmally low as most men do not consider themselves to be vulnerable based on the study done in Pakistan. In the study conducted by Mir, Reichenbach and Wahid (2009) and even other studies shows that women know how they should prevent STIs and AIDS with the use of condoms. The female genders sometimes feels incapable to decide since they feel that this depends on their partners wish. They acknowledged that they don't have the real decision-making power and are afraid of sparking suspicion of infidelity, thereby causing the couple to separate (Hebling & Guimarães, 2004).

Table 4
Relationship of Degree of Acceptability and Religion

Degree of Acceptability	Religion				χ^2	Table Value	Interpretation
	Roman Catholic		Non-Catholic				
	Fo	Fe	Fo	Fe			
Very Acceptable	41	42	6	5	0.22	7.82	Null Hypothesis is Accepted
Acceptable	29	28	2	3	0.34		
Less Acceptable	1	2	1	0.2	3.7		
Not Acceptable	1	0.9	0	0.1	0.11		
df = 3					Total χ^2 :	4.37	
@ 0.05 α							

Table 4 shows the relationship between the degree of acceptability on condom use in the prevention of STIs and the respondents' religion. It showed that the χ^2 was 4.37. It also showed that the table value was 7.82, with the df of 3 at 0.05 α .

This further shows the χ^2 of 4.37, that was substantially lesser than the table value of 7.82.

The result suggests that there is no significant relationship between the degree of acceptability of condom use and the respondents' religion. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. This is supported by a study done in Jakarta in 2001 which revealed that higher level of sexual experience emerged for those attending Christian high schools (Utomo & McDonald, 2009).

Table 5
Relationship of Degree of Acceptability and Civil Status

Degree of Acceptability	Civil Status				X ²	Table Value	Interpretation
	Single		Married				
	Fo	Fe	Fo	Fe			
Very Acceptable	32	30	16	18	0.22	7.82	Null Hypothesis is Accepted
Acceptable	17	18	13	12	0.34		
Less Acceptable	0	1	2	1	3.7		
Not Acceptable	1	1	0	0.4	0.11		
df = 3					Total X ² :		
@ 0.05 α					2.89		

Table 5 shows the relationship between the degree of acceptability on condom use in the prevention of STIs and the respondents' civil status. It further showed that the computed χ^2 was 2.89. It also showed that the table value was 7.82, with the df of 3 at 0.05 α . This further shows that the computed Chi-square value of 2.89, was substantially lesser than the table value of 7.82. This means that, there is no significant relationship between the degree of acceptability and the respondents' civil status, thus, accepting the null hypothesis.

The study shows that women dislike using condoms less than their men with the reason of feeling awkward when using condom and mechanical nature setback such as slipping off and bursting (Aggleto, Davies & Hart, 1992). This is supported by the study done in Thailand in 2005 wherein more unmarried (74.5%) than married (49.6%) had knowledge about the modes of Human Immunodeficiency Virus transmissions (Arca, 2005). A study also revealed that husband-

to-wife-transmission is the main Human Immunodeficiency Virus transmission route in Cambodia (Chaya, 1990).

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the use of condoms is considered as a health seeking behavior. It is indeed a change and maintenance health behavior resulting to a framework on health actions.

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